



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING

MONDAY, August 12, 2013 - 7:00 P.M.

Community Meeting Chambers, Los Altos City Hall
1 North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, California

ESTABLISH QUORUM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Members of the audience may bring to the Commission's attention any item that is not on the agenda. Please complete a "Request to Speak" form and submit it to the Staff Liaison. Speakers are generally given two or three minutes, at the discretion of the Chair. Please be advised that, by law, the Commission is unable to discuss or take action on issues presented during the Public Comment Period. According to State Law (also known as "the Brown Act") items must first be noticed on the agenda before any discussion or action.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

1. Commission minutes
Approve minutes of the meeting of July 8, 2013
2. Los Altos Climate Action Plan
Accept staff report on Draft Climate Action Plan
3. Environmental public information forums
Review and discuss opportunities, topics and methodology for public education and outreach
4. Environmental Commission website
 - a. Receive update on website activity and migration to new City website
 - b. Review edits to draft article for website – Fostering Bird Habitat

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5. Increasing watershed awareness and stewardship in Los Altos
Receive Subcommittee and staff update on watershed signage on roads crossing creeks

6. Disposal and management of Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) and reusable bags
Receive staff report on status of reusable bag ordinance outreach activities and EPS
7. Monthly staff report
Receive information and announcements from City staff

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

SPECIAL NOTICES TO PUBLIC

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Los Altos will make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. If you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk at least 48 hours prior to the meeting at (650) 947-2720.

Agendas, Staff Reports and some associated documents for the Environmental Commission items may be viewed on the Internet at <http://losaltosca.gov/committees-commissions/environmental/meetings.html>

If you wish to provide written materials, please provide the Commission Staff Liaison with **10 copies** of any document that you would like to submit to the Commissioners in order for it to become part of the public record.

For other questions regarding the meeting proceedings, please contact the City Clerk at (650) 947-2720.

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE
CITY OF LOS ALTOS, HELD ON MONDAY, JULY 8, 2013 AT
7:00 P.M. AT LOS ALTOS COMMUNITY MEETING CHAMBERS,
1 NORTH SAN ANTONIO ROAD,
LOS ALTOS, CALIFORNIA**

ESTABLISH QUORUM

PRESENT: Keller, Bray, Reed, Hedden

ABSENT: Eyre, Yuan, Ardehali

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

None

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Gerry Glaser presented information on Community Choice Aggregation (CCA)

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/ACTION

1. Commission Minutes
Action: Upon a motion by Commissioner Reed, seconded by Commissioner Bray, the Commission unanimously approved the minutes of the meeting of June 10, 2013.
2. Environmental Public Information Forums
No report. Comments made under discussion of work plan.
3. Environmental Commission Website
 - a. Received update and website activity from June 7 through July 1, 2013 as 73 and 804 cumulative hits to the website.
 - b. No action on draft article for website – Fostering Bird Habitat
4. Environmental Commission FY 2013/14 Work Plan
Reviewed, discussed and updated progress on FY 2013/14 Work Plan. Consensus to use Work Plan items as agenda items to avoid repetition of discussion.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

5. Los Altos Climate Action Plan
Received staff update on progress of the Climate Action Plan
6. Disposal and Management of Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) and Reusable Bags
Received staff report on status of reusable bag ordinance outreach activities and EPS

7. Increasing Watershed Awareness and Stewardship in Los Altos
Received Subcommittee and staff update on watershed signage on roads crossing creeks
8. Monthly Staff Report
Received information and announcements from City Staff

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS

POTENTIAL FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Eyre adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.



DATE: August 12, 2013

AGENDA ITEM # 2

TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: Zachary Dahl, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: Draft Climate Action Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

Take public comment on the Draft Climate Action Plan

BACKGROUND

State Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), the Global Warming Solutions Act, was signed into law in 2006 and directed public agencies in California to support the statewide target of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. One means to support AB 32 is through the preparation of a climate action plan (CAP), which provides a policy framework for how a jurisdiction can reduce GHG emissions. Compliance with AB 32 is not a mandatory requirement for public agencies, but it can qualify a jurisdiction for incentives such as additional grant funding and streamlined environmental review for new projects. Many communities on the Peninsula and in the greater Bay Area have adopted, or are in the process of adopting, climate action plans or GHG reduction strategies.

Over the past 18 months, staff has been working with Pacific Municipal Consultants (PMC), the City's CAP consultant, to prepare a qualified GHG reduction strategy (CAP) for the City. This includes preparation of an inventory of the City's existing GHG emissions for municipal operations and community-wide, a calculation of the City's anticipated emissions into the future, a summary of recent State legislative actions and how they will reduce City emissions, and an overview of the City's existing accomplishments (i.e., the Green Building Ordinance, the Solid Waste Hauling Franchise Agreement, adoption of the Bicycle Master Plan) and how they will contribute to reducing future City emissions.

Using this information, options for setting a GHG reduction target for the City and a suite of reduction measures, policies and programs were drafted by staff and PMC. This information was presented to the Environmental Commission at public meetings on February 11, 2013 and March 11, 2013. At the March meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council consider adopting a GHG reduction target of 18 percent.

On April 23, 2013, the City Council held a public meeting to discuss setting a GHG reduction target and to provide input on the suite of reduction measures that should be used to achieve that reduction target. Following public comments and discussion, the Council voted unanimously to set a

minimum reduction target of 15 percent and to direct staff to evaluate additional measures and to report on costs and feasibility of achieving a higher reduction rate.

DISCUSSION

Draft Climate Action Plan

The Draft CAP includes a range of incentives, education, and regulations within five focus areas – Transportation, Energy, Resource Conservation, Green Community and Municipal Operations – to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions within the City of Los Altos. The Plan's reduction measures would be applicable to both new and existing development. Full implementation of the reduction measures contained in the CAP would reduce the community's 2020 emissions by 15,640 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents (MTCO₂e), which would help the City achieve a 17 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

The Draft CAP was released for public review on July 9, 2013. The City is providing a 45-day public review period for the Draft CAP. Written comments should be submitted to the City by 5:00 pm on Friday, August 23, 2013.

Public outreach for the publication of the Draft CAP included a display ad in the Town Crier on July 24, 2013, email notification to all City commissioners and local organizations (Chamber of Commerce, Los Altos Village Association, GreenTown Los Altos, Los Altos Neighborhood Network, etc.), posting of the Draft CAP on the City's website and hardcopies available at City hall and the Public Library.

Public Review and Approval Process

The intent of this public meeting before the Environmental Commission is to provide an opportunity for the public to get additional information about the Draft CAP and submit comments, and for the Commission to ask questions and discuss the proposed measures and policies in the Draft CAP. On September 9, 2013, the Draft CAP will be brought back to the Commission, along with any written public comments, for further consideration. At this meeting, the goal will be to have the Commission provide a formal recommendation on the CAP to the City Council.

The City Council will hold a public meeting to consider the Draft CAP, public comments and the Environmental Commission's recommendation on September 24, 2013. Once the Council takes action on the Draft CAP, staff will prepare a Negative Declaration per the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to meet environmental review requirements. Once the CEQA review process has been completed, the CAP will be brought back to Council for final consideration and adoption.



DATE: August 12, 2013

AGENDA ITEM # 3

TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: J. Logan, Staff Liaison

SUBJECT: Environmental Public Information Forums

RECOMMENDATION:

Review and discuss opportunities, topics and methodology for public education and outreach

BACKGROUND

The Environmental Commission Work Plan, Goal 1, is to provide community education outreach activities in accordance with the Council approved work plan goals to advance natural resource conservation and environmental quality in Los Altos.

The Commission determines topics and opportunities for approved public forums related to sustainability. An example of public outreach activities were public forums held prior to the award of the waste disposal contract and a study to determine both Municipal and Community Green House Gas emissions for the City. Current outreach efforts include the design and analysis of a survey to the community to facilitate and gain public input for the Los Altos Climate Action Plan and coordination with the Climate Action Plan consultant firm and with the Community Development Department. An additional topic is single-use bags and issues involved with polystyrene products.

DISCUSSION

The Environmental Commission is continuing discussion regarding community education and outreach activities.

To that goal, a Commission subcommittee is exploring topic ideas and approaches on additional ways to engage the public via education and information forums, various outreach mechanisms. The subcommittee will guide this discussion.



DATE: August 12, 2013

AGENDA ITEM # 4

TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: J. Logan, Staff Liaison

SUBJECT: Environmental Commission Website

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Receive update on website activity and migration to new City website
- B. Review draft article for website – Fostering Bird Habitat

BACKGROUND

The Commission redesigned and reorganized the content on the Environmental Commission website on the City's Commission webpage. Knowing that a major redesign of the City site was planned and is now coming to conclusion, the Commission undertook this project as a temporary solution with the expectation that the Environmental website will be blended under the City site once the site is constructed. The introductory statement on the Commission website states the purpose as:

“The City of Los Altos Environmental Commission has designed this site to inform and educate the community about local programs and initiatives that support the environment and to provide information about resources available throughout Santa Clara County and the Bay Area.”

The Environmental Commission seeks to maintain the website with relevant, high value content, in a manner that is visually pleasing, navigates well, and ties into the City website. The Commission monitors website hits and has seen an increase of viewership during 2013. Website content areas are:

- Recycling
- Hazardous Waste Disposal
- Greening an Event
- Greenhouse Gas Inventory
- Green Building
- Alternatives in Transportation
- Water Conservation
- Storm Water Protection
- Sustainable Eating

Landscaping with Native Plants
Tree Protection
Local Creeks
About the Commission
City of Los Altos

DISCUSSION

Staff will comment on the progress of the migration of the Environmental Commission web pages to the new City website. The migration activity is currently in the implementation phase. The citizen focus groups met with the website design team and provided feedback about the website's navigation, content and aesthetics. Following the focus groups results, implementation of needed changes was completed. The new City website will be presented to the City Council at Council meeting on August 13, 2013.

Environmental Commission will also review and give comments on a draft document on Fostering Bird Habitat that can be posted as content to the website.

The number of Environmental Commission website hits from July 1, 2013, through August 1, 2013 is 123, and 927 cumulative total hits for January 1 through August 1, 2013.



DATE: August 12, 2013

AGENDA ITEM # 5

TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: J. Logan, Staff Liaison

SUBJECT: Increased Watershed Awareness and Stewardship in Los Altos

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive update on watershed signage on roads crossing creeks

BACKGROUND

The Commission partners with Acterra, GreenTown Los Altos and the community to raise awareness and provide education about local creeks, clean-up efforts and water run-off in order to preserve local creek habitat and water quality. The Commission has expressed interest in creek identification signage that will inform the public of the name of the creeks at bridge crossing to promote information and pride in our local creeks and natural habitat.

DISCUSSION

The Planning and Transportation Commission will be reviewing the Fremont bridge design and as part of the project, it is planned that Permanente Creek is to be identified on the Fremont bridge signage.

For other bridges that cross creeks, staff suggests the Environmental Commission could participate and take forward a project to identify major creeks at bridge crossing. The following steps are recommended:

1. Identification of appropriate locations for creek signage. The City has four major creeks at multiple crossings. Environmental Commission input would be helpful to identify locations that would be appropriate for creek signage.
2. Staff report with presentation to and direction from Council to proceed with creek identification and signage
3. Procure consulting services to develop examples for creek signage
4. Staff develops budget and costs for presentation to Council for approval and funding

The Commission subcommittee presented a report and series of photographs to identify locations for consideration of creek signage. Staff reviewed the report and held meetings with the subcommittee to discuss next steps. Staff will provide assistance to advise and coordinate creek signage placement and installation, type of signs and budget for signs. The subcommittee researched information on costs and purchase of signage and presented this information for discussion with the Commission and staff. Upon conclusion of the project, a report with recommendations will be prepared for Council.



DATE: August 12, 2013

AGENDA ITEM # 6

TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: J. Logan, Staff Liaison

SUBJECT: Disposal and Management of Expanded Polystyrene (EPS) and Reusable Bags

RECOMMENDATION:

A. Receive staff report on status of public outreach for reusable bag ordinance and EPS

BACKGROUND

The issue of restrictions on single use bags and polystyrene foam food containers was presented to the City Council at the January 10, 2012 Council meeting as a strategy to help mitigate effects of litter in storm water. City Council authorized staff to submit the City of Los Altos' Baseline Trash Load and Short-Term Trash Load Reduction Plan to the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board. This Plan lists trash control measures that the City of Los Altos will need to implement in order to reduce the City's trash loads 40% by July 2014 as required by the Municipal Regional Storm water Discharge NPDES Permit (MRP). Two such control measures include prohibiting dispensing single use plastic bags at the checkout stands of retail establishments and prohibiting the use of polystyrene foam food containers at food service facilities.

On April 10, 2012, Council directed staff to participate in San Mateo County's collaborative regional effort to complete an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that includes a proposed ordinance for reusable bags.

During City Council meeting in January, February and March 2013, Council took action on staff recommendations to prepare ordinances for the ban on plastic bags and approve proposals for public outreach and information to the community.

The Environmental Commission has been engaged in following the activities of the San Mateo Environmental Impact Report public hearings and reports in which the City of Los Altos was a participating member and in outreach activities to the community to promote the use of re-use bags and restrain the use of single use bags.

DISCUSSION

During April and May, 2013, staff has completed the following public outreach and informational activities in the community.

1. Preparation of the retail tool kits, including flyers and design, purchase and distribution of "Shop Los Altos" re-usable bags
2. Door to door visits to the commercial community in late April
3. Staffing a table at the Farmers' Market on Thursdays from 4-8 pm
4. Held two merchant outreach forums
5. Preparation of an insert flyer for distribution to residents in the Mission Trails Waste System newsletter.

Staff update on the EPS ban:

1. City of Los Altos is listed as a participant city in the City of San Jose EIR
2. The City of San Jose staff will present their report to San Jose Council for adoption of the Negative Declaration/ Initial Study at the end of August
3. Los Altos staff attended and participated in the Food Ware Vendor Open House that was held at the Sunnyvale Senior Center on Tuesday, August 6, 2013. The purpose of the event was for vendor displays of take-out food containers. Invitees included proprietors of food service businesses. This event was coordinated among the Cities of Sunnyvale, Cupertino, Sunnyvale and Los Altos. The City of Sunnyvale took the lead on this event. The City of Los Altos sent out invitations to all of the food service facilities in Los Altos.
4. The event was attended by six food vendors in the morning session and sixteen vendors in the afternoon. Sixteen restaurants participated. None from Los Altos attended. Sample food container products that are alternative to EPS were distributed.



DATE: August 12, 2013

AGENDA ITEM # 7

TO: Environmental Commission

FROM: J. Logan, Staff Liaison

SUBJECT: Monthly Staff Report

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive information and announcements from City staff

BACKGROUND

Staff monthly updates will be discussed as listed below.

DISCUSSION

1. Updated Work Plan
2. Council Reports and Council Meeting Attendance
August 13, 2013 – Commissioner Ardehali;
September 10, 2013 - Commissioner Bray

Attachments: Environmental Commission 2013/14 Work Plan (July 30, 2013)

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
2013/14 Work Plan
(as of July 30, 2013)

Goal	Projects	Assignments	Target Date	Status
Community education and outreach	City website – Environmental information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify information gaps and update content (Reed, staff) Revise document recommending healthy and sustainable chemicals/products used inside and outside the home (Ardehali) Develop web info on fostering local birds (Eyre) 	<p>Dependent on City timetable Est. July, 2013</p> <p>Est. June 2010</p> <p>May 2013</p>	<p>Reed served as Community Focus Group member</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>In progress</p>
	Public information forums to the community (quarterly or tri-annually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop proposal for initial event (Hedden, Keller) 	May 2013	Reformed sub-committee to Hedden, Keller to develop proposal
	City performance Dashboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify parameters and sources of information (Bray) 	TBD: Dependent on C.A.P timetable	On hold waiting for C.A.P Report
	Aid in developing, Public input to a Los Altos Climate Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine next steps after Council approves 2020 goal (Eyre, Bray, Hedden) 	Public input meetings in Aug. & Sept.	EC will make recommendation to Council for Sept.24 Council agenda

ATTACHMENT

Watershed stewardship	Signage on bridges over local streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take photos of bridges over streams and recommend where creek signage should be placed (Fyre, Keller) Review plans for creek signage on new Fremont Ave bridge over Permanente Creek when design is finalized 	Done Under design by Engineering Dept.	Proposal presented and in planning and budget phase with staff On hold pending engineering
	Stream water quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive status of new SCVURPPP study data on water quality of local streams Incorporate stream quality data into Dashboard (Bray) Review Storm Drain Master Plan when released. Encourage labeling of storm drain inlets with signage that specifies the recipient stream 	Data not available for local level Report in progress Engineering Report in progress	In Progress Pending report
	MTWS diversion rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to provide suggestions for next steps 	Pending report	On hold
Solid waste diversion and source reduction practices	Single use plastic bag ban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate assisting on community outreach 	Done	Assisted with outreach and educ. efforts
	Expanded polystyrene (EPS) ban	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider recommendation based on staff presentation/input 	Waiting EIR from S.J.	Assistance with outreach and educ.
Green business practices	Green purchasing and operational practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate applicability of Green Business Initiative program to Los Altos businesses 	Under discussion	Project under discussion